

REMARKS


Claims 1, 2 and 4-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) on the basis of Watanabe et al. (US 2001/0040777). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection because the cited reference is not prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Applicants submit, herewith, a verified English translation of the priority application, Japanese application JP2001-052825, to perfect priority. The certified copy of this document was filed on February 27, 2001.

Watanabe et al. is not 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) prior art to the present application because the United States filing date of Watanabe, March 20, 2001, is after the priority date of the present application, February 27, 2001. Thus, since the foreign priority date of the present invention is earlier than the United States filing date of Watanabe, and since the claim for priority has been perfected with the filing of the enclosed verified translation, Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) rejection of claims 1, 2 and 4-8 be withdrawn. See MPEP § 201.15.

Accordingly, as the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) rejections of claims 1, 2 and 4-8 under Watanabe et al. were the only outstanding rejections of these claims, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are allowable, and an indication of such allowance is respectfully requested. For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe that this case is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner should call Applicants' attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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